



# Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 3020.26

May 26, 1995

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USD(P)

SUBJECT: Continuity of Operations (COOP) Policy and Planning

References: (a) DoD Directive 3020.26, "Continuity of Operations Policies and Planning," October 24, 1985 (hereby canceled)  
(b) Executive Order 12656, "Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities," November 18, 1988  
(c) Executive Order 12787, "The Order of Succession of Officers to Act as Secretary of Defense," December 31, 1991

## 1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive reissues reference (a) to update responsibilities to ensure effective performance of critical DoD missions and continuation of mission-essential functions during emergencies.

## 2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, and the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components"). The term "Military Services," as used herein, also refers to the Coast Guard when it is operating as a Military Service in the Navy.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Continuity of Government (COG). The continuity of mission-essential functions of all Federal Departments and Agencies during any national security emergency through a system that:

3.1.1. Provides for succession to office and emergency delegation of authority, in accordance with applicable law; and

3.1.2. Establishes emergency operating capabilities that include safekeeping of key people and essential resources, facilities, and records.

3.2. Continuity of Operations (COOP). The capability of a DoD Component to continue mission-essential functions without unacceptable interruption. COOP planning includes preparatory measures, response actions, and restoration activities planned or taken to ensure continuation of these functions to maintain military effectiveness, readiness, and survivability.

3.3. Mission-Essential Functions. Those continuing functions that must be performed to achieve the DoD's critical missions. Those comprise, but are not limited to, the following:

3.3.1. Command and control of assets.

3.3.2. The receipt, assessment, analysis, processing, display, and dissemination of information necessary to perform critical missions and support decision making.

3.3.3. Other operations that must be performed to achieve mission success.

3.4. National Security Emergency. Any occurrence including, but not limited to, natural disaster, military attack, technological failures, civil unrest, or other disruptive condition that seriously degrades or threatens the national security of the United States.

#### 4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. The DoD Components shall plan for and take actions to ensure that mission-essential functions shall continue effectively and without interruption by establishing COOP plans that:

4.1.1. Enhance DoD COG planning.

4.1.2. Anticipate any national security emergency with flexible and responsive plans.

4.1.3. Are executable when there is little or no warning.

4.1.4. Anticipate hostile action directed against DoD activities anywhere in the world. That includes surprise attacks by any means prior to relocation or protective measures taking place. Protective plans shall be executed when sufficient warning of destructive actions exists.

4.2. The DoD Components shall prioritize mission-essential functions and identify those that can be deferred during a national security emergency until time and resources permit restoration. The DoD Components shall consider the impact on other DoD Components when identifying functions that can be deferred.

4.3. COOP shall be addressed in three basic phases, as follows:

4.3.1. Pre-event actions provide protective efforts to ensure continuity and plans to restore deferred functions.

4.3.2. Trans-event actions are taken during the causative event. Priority shall be given to maintenance of functions, military operations and logistical support thereof, maintenance and restoration of law and order, military support to civil authorities, and damage and residual resource assessment.

4.3.3. Post-event actions shall focus on full restoration of military operations, communications and transportation, and less essential functions. Headquarters staffs, capabilities, and functions shall be reconstituted as resources permit.

4.4. COOP plans and programs shall identify critical requirements and procurement needs. DoD Component management and Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence functions that support the National Military Command System and the Unified Combatant Commands require capabilities that are as robust as those of the forces and leadership structure they support.

4.5. COOP plans shall specify emergency and alternate staffs as necessary during the implementation of COOP plans such that:

4.5.1. The emergency coordinating staff (ECS) is minimal and able to execute those tasks necessary to transition or relocate operations from a primary to an emergency relocation site (ERS).

4.5.2. The alternate command staff (ACS) may be assigned permanently or on rotation to an Alternate Headquarters (AH). The purpose of the ACS is to do the following:

4.5.2.1. Maintain the alternate command capability.

4.5.2.2. Support the primary command center as directed until devolution of command to the AH or an ERS occurs.

4.5.2.3. Manage transition to full operations at the AH when the primary command center is not available and perform designated functions as required.

4.5.3. Successors and alternates shall be designated to replace command authorities. The conditions of replacement and responsibilities and authorities to be delegated to successors shall be shown in each DoD Component's Plan.

4.5.4. Instructions for emergency staffs shall include the staff assignments, emergency duty stations, notification procedures, and other actions to be taken in emergencies.

#### 4.6. Alternate Headquarters and Emergency Relocation Sites

4.6.1. The DoD Components shall designate AHs or ERSs at each command level down to the lowest level necessary to meet the intent of this Directive. An AH or ERS may be shared with other organizations if the operations of both can be effectively executed simultaneously.

4.6.2. Centralized coordination and documentation in the selection of an ERS is required to prevent potential interference with or compromise of sensitive locations or operations. The DoD Components shall designate a single point of contact (POC) for ERS coordination. Following the identification and coordination of candidate ERSs, the surveying, selection, and acquisition of an ERS for fixed and mobile headquarters is the responsibility of the DoD Component.

4.7. The DoD Components shall maintain current all necessary files, documents, computer software, and databases required to carryout COOP plans for immediate use by emergency staffs. Plans shall include instructions for establishing database content, manner of preservation, and transportation.

4.8. In the event of a national security emergency, systems of alerts, notifications, reporting, and responses that occur in civil governments and agencies nearly parallel those that occur in the DoD Components. DoD Component plans and preparedness measures shall recognize, endeavor to assist, and take advantage of any such parallel processes as provided for by the USD(P).

4.9. The DoD Components shall issue detailed security classification guidance as follows:

4.9.1. Information that may be generally unclassified includes the following:

4.9.1.1. General duties of individuals, personal planning, advance financial arrangements, and other administrative matters that must be known by those involved in COOP planning unless classified due to other security requirements.

4.9.1.2. General information on the overall COOP planning program, existence of DoD Component alternate plans and arrangements, means to protect vital records, and plans for periodic testing to determine operational readiness.

4.9.1.3. Matters about executive guidance, such as the procedures for designating successors and delegating authority.

4.9.1.4. The use of the titles including the National Military Command Center, National Military Command Center-Site R, Federal Emergency Management Agency Special Facility, and the National Airborne Operations Center.

4.9.2. Information that shall be considered for security classification includes the following:

4.9.2.1. How and by whom people shall be alerted and individual alerting responsibilities.

4.9.2.2. Listing and location of indispensable records.

4.9.2.3. Planning assumptions on the nature of the threat and weapons effects.

4.9.2.4. Priorities for devolution of command to and between an AH or ERS.

4.9.2.5. Transportation and relocation instructions including security measures to be used to protect AH or ERS facilities and people while traveling to and occupying facilities.

4.9.2.6. Special communications preparations.

4.9.2.7. Overall strength and composition of people within AH and ERS facilities.

4.9.2.8. Primary and alternate command center operating details.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, shall:

5.1.1. Ensure that succession to office in the Department of Defense is implemented per E.O. 12787 (reference (c)), as modified by law.

5.1.2. Oversee the DoD COOP program development and provide guidance.

5.1.3. Prepare the COOP plan for the OSD.

5.1.4. Receive, review, and maintain current editions of all COOP plans and notify the DoD Components of plans that are not in compliance or are in potential conflict with other plans.

5.1.5. Identify means that may enable the DoD Components to take advantage of parallel processes in non-DoD organizations and disseminate that information, as needed.

5.1.6. Coordinate and oversee ERS selection and issue detailed instructions, as needed.

5.1.7. Act as POC for non-DoD COOP and related policies and programs.

5.1.8. Direct and assess periodic tests of DoD COOP plans and programs.

5.1.9. Verify DoD compliance with E.O. 12656 (reference b).

5.2. The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs shall issue public affairs guidance on DoD-level COOP policies, planning, and implementation actions, and respond to any media or public queries about DoD COOP.

5.3. The Heads of the DoD Components shall:

5.3.1. Prepare, implement, and exercise COOP plans required by this Directive and shall provide a copy of the plan to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff; the USD(P), and each other DoD Component or Federal Department or Agency affected per reference (b).

5.3.2. Ensure that COOP plans are updated, tested, and validated at least every 2 years.

5.3.3. Ensure, as follows, that emergency staff members are:

5.3.3.1. Cleared for access to classified materials and designated sites.

5.3.3.2. Available through alert notification and recall procedures.

5.3.3.3. Briefed on all aspects of relocating to and operating at designated sites.

5.3.3.4. Exercised in emergency relocation at least every 2 years.

5.3.4. Coordinate all external transportation requirements with the U.S. Commander in Chief, Transportation Command (USCINCTRANS).

5.4. The Secretaries of the Military Departments, besides those actions required under paragraph 5.3., above, shall coordinate the development of and provide staff support for execution of OSD and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff COOP plans herein required.

5.5. The Secretary of the Air Force, besides those actions required under paragraphs 5.3. and 5.4., above, shall develop and maintain plans necessary for emergency evacuation for the National Capital Region and, with any needed assistance of the other Military Departments and the Defense Agencies, ensure that such plans and procedures provide for orderly, phased evacuation of key people and resources during national security emergencies.

5.6. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, besides those actions required under paragraph 5.3., above, shall provide planning guidance to and coordination with the Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands, the Military Services, and the Defense Agencies.


5.7. The Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands, besides those actions required under paragraph 5.3., above, shall ensure that:

5.7.1. Where that command possesses nuclear weapons, a capability exists to implement emergency action DoD Directives through the trans-event and post-event periods.

5.7.2. Non-nuclear commands shall be capable of providing essential support required by nuclear-capable commands during the trans-event and post-event periods.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.



William S. Perry  
Secretary of Defense